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15 October 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

2003

SUBJECT: PBSUCCESS - 4:00 p.m. Meeting in Mr. Wisner's office.  
Present - Mr. Wisner, General Erskine, Col. Smith,  
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1. [ ] met with Mr. Wisner, General Erskine and Col. Smith of General Erskine's office to discuss problems attendant upon expediting authorization of military aid to Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador. General Erskine stated that action had not been taken within the Joint Chiefs which would make it possible for the Secretary of Defense to communicate with the Department of State for action essential to further negotiations between State and the Nicaraguan Government. Col. Smith indicated that the Joint Chiefs would be unwilling to approve military aid pacts with the three countries in question unless they could be given some more convincing reason why such action was justifiable. He pointed out that a comparable request had been denied by the previous Joint Chiefs, and stated that he felt the present body would be reluctant to reverse the decision of its predecessor. Mr. Wisner pointed out that the action requested was based on a decision of the OCB which called upon CIA, State and Defense to carry out certain measures all directed toward a common classified end. He further outlined clearly and repeatedly why moderate military aid to Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador was desirable, but stated that he did not feel it would serve any useful purpose for the detailed CIA plan of operations to be divulged to the Department of Defense. Col. Smith repeated his feeling that unless more information could be given to the Joint Chiefs they could not be expected to act favorably. General Erskine stated that he understood the problem and was particularly anxious to avoid a situation in which the Joint Chiefs would be ordered to take favorable action, a development which could only serve to increase hostility to this operation in the Pentagon. He remarked in closing that he planned to see Admiral Radford on the morning of 16 October in the hope of working out a satisfactory solution.

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